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Best Birding Spots: Part 3

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

DEDICATED TO NATURAL HISTORY AND CONSERVATION



**Volume 52
Number 3
July-September 2018**



**Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club
Club des naturalistes d'Ottawa**

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club
Club des naturalistes d'Ottawa

— Founded 1879 —

Diane Lepage, President

Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse the information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*, a quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and *Trail & Landscape*, a quarterly providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on Club activities.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for members; see "Coming Events" in this issue.

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On the cover:

Juvenile Baird's Sandpiper in Embrun

on August 23, 2015. Photo by Jacques Bouvier.

See "How to Find 250 Bird Species in the OFNC Study Area in a Single Year, Part 3" on page 174.

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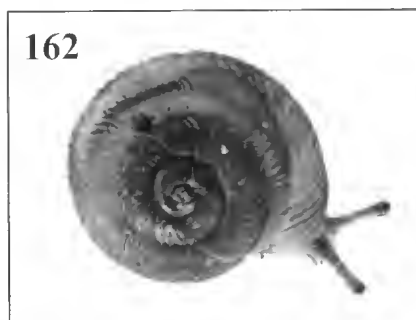
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Welcome New Members

Ottawa Area

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David Camack & Family
M. Crawford-Bewley & Family
Linda Dansky Garfinkle
Thomas Delsey
Thomas Devecseri
Jason Dubois & Family
Jesse Fortier
Maureen Freemark
Alan G. Galley & Family
Graeme Hopkins
Hank Jones & Family
Rajiv Kalsi & Family
Roberta Kay
Leona Kiez
Dan Li & Family

Katalijn MacAfee & Family
Julie Marentette
Kathleen M. McCrea
Islombek Mukhamadiev
Janette Niwa
Jodi Peterson & Family
Robert Pinilla/Amber Bonvie
Patricia Pollock & Family
Isabella Richmond
Blyth Robertson
Ron & Eleanor Rose
Sharon E. Rouatt
Michelle Hope Rumford
Karine Scott
Ken Steele & Family
Kathleen Stephenson
Miriam Tepper
Camille Tremblay
Alice Tremblay
Peter Turner & Family

Gatineau Area

Vincent E. Agnes

Ontario

Jeff Card
Wendy Hogan & Family
Michel Gauthier & Family
Anthony Kaduck

Henry Steger
Chair, Membership Committee
May 2018 🦉

A Tribute to **F. Montgomery Brigham**

Bruce M. Di Labio, Daniel F. Brunton, Ronald J. Pittaway and Brian Moran



*Monty Brigham, mid-1990s.
Photographer unknown.*

It's with great sadness that we report the passing of F. Montgomery (Monty) Brigham of Ottawa and Gatineau on November 10, 2017. Monty was Valley royalty, a direct descendant of Ottawa's founding family, the Wrights. He was born on November 7, 1944, and was raised and educated here in a family that enjoyed being in and exploring the natural world.

His interest in birding began in the mid-1950s, but it was during the 1960s and early 1970s that he really made his mark at the head of a group of young keeners that included Ron Pittaway, Dan Brunton, Don Lafontaine, John Dubois, Joe Dafoe, Ken Ross, Brian Morin and the late Richard Poulin. (It is telling of our keenness but still a bit remarkable to consider that every member of that group worked at least part of their professional careers investigating, promoting and/or protecting the natural flora and fauna of Canada).

Monty was the senior member of our group in age as well, and thus being employed earlier than most, had more disposable income . . . which is to say, some! He had top-notch binoculars and a top-of-the-line spotting scope long before most other birders and certainly before any other of the younger lads (and it was all "lads" for a very long time). But he was as generous with access to his exotic technology as he was with his knowledge and with his time. Appreciating the time and attention they had received from the likes of the National Museum's "Big Three" – Earl Godfrey, Stu MacDonald and John Crosby – Monty and companions mentored many Ottawa birders, younger and older, in the late 60s and early 70s. These included Bruce Di Labio, Roger Foxall, Tom Hince, Bruce Mactavish, Stephen O'Donnell, Michael Runtz, and others.

Monty's field skills were the envy of his fellow birders. So, too, was his motorcycle, since in the 1960s most of us had no means of mechanical travel other than our bicycles and the

good will of parents prepared to give up the car for a weekend morning, if you washed it afterwards, that is. During those early years, Monty's relative mobility and keen perception resulted in numerous local finds, including the first accepted record of King Rail for Ottawa and the 50-km radius Ottawa District at Shirley's Bay in June 1965, which was subsequently seen and heard by many other birders.

One of Di Labio's early birding memories was a spring bird count with Monty and Joe Dafoe. As a teenager in 1973 on an OFNC bird count in late May, it was an exciting moment for him to witness Monty "call in" a Northern Saw-whet Owl – a lifer! The bird flew in just over the heads of the group and landed nearby.



On the Great Wild Ptarmigan "Hunt": Dan Brunton, Ron Pittaway, Rick Pittaway and Monty Brigham at Senneterre, Quebec, February 28, 1971. Photographer unknown.

In May 1975, Monty discovered a Henslow's Sparrow near Malakoff. Though a regular scarce breeder during the 1950s and 1960s in the Ottawa-Gatineau region, this was the first record in many years and a lifer for the next generation of birders. An even earlier (1964) memorable moment with Monty, watching an adult Woodcock carrying (intentionally or otherwise) a fledgling between its legs as it flew off from a thicket along the Ottawa River shore in Aylmer, remains vivid for Brunton. And neither Brunton nor Pittaway will ever forget the insanely delightful wild ride in 1971 with Monty in the dead of

winter up to the Quebec Clay Belt in the faint hope of seeing some Willow Ptarmigan that had been reported there sometime earlier – and succeeding! Being in the field with Monty was always upbeat, intense and productive. And a lot of fun.

Monty was an expert in "squeaking", a technique which he perfected during the 1960s. He established many exceptional finds this way long before other birders were aware of the technique or mastered it for themselves.

Monty was compiler and chief organizer of the Ottawa Christmas Bird Count (CBC) for many years and participated in other local counts as well, including the Dunrobin-Breckenridge CBC during the 1980s. He always contributed an interesting list of species – Northern Goshawk, Barred Owl, American Robin and numerous finches – due to his particular skill in squeaking. He was also the driving force (literally and figuratively) behind a CBC held in 1968 far back into the wilds of LaVerendrye Park, western Quebec, in hopes of establishing CBC record totals for Boreal Forest birds such as Gray Jay and Spruce Grouse. The counts were most memorable, however, for the extreme cold and absence of birds (!) – and for the delightfully crazy adventure of it all. We'll just forget about the unfortunate roll-over of his top-heavy Bronco far, far up that winter logging road – at the hand of another driver – that required the truck to literally be man-handled back upright in order to effect an escape!



Ron Pittaway, Don Lafontaine and Monty Brigham scoping out a possible CBC location in LaVerendrye Park, November 17, 1968. Photo by D. F. Brunton.

As an active member of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, he served on the Council (Board of Directors) as Treasurer from 1969 through 1971, was Club auditor for over 30 years and led numerous field trips. During the 1970s Monty, along with Brian Morin, capably filled in as writers of the weekly "Bird's-eye View" birding column in the *Ottawa Journal*, during columnist John Bird's periodic absences.

Monty enjoyed doing May "Big Day" runs and was known for

keeping especially meticulous journal notes and records of these and all things. His interest in managing details made him an obvious (and effective) organizer of such things as the aforementioned Christmas Bird Count. During the 1970s, however, Monty's birding focus changed to recording bird songs and calls. He entered into this new field with typical gusto, soon producing professional quality results. He released a number of excellent and commercially successful vinyl LP records in the following years, including *Songs of the Season*, *Pelee Spring* and *Algonquin Park*. His biggest and proudest audio challenge, however, was the production of a sound field guide to supplement Earl Godfrey's *The Birds of Canada* in 1986, appropriately named the *Bird Sounds of Canada*. The three volumes and six CDs covering over 300 species aided hundreds of birders for many years thereafter in learning Canadian bird songs.

In 2010, the Ottawa Field-Naturalist Club awarded him with the Anne Hanes Natural History Award in recognition of his decades of achievements as a naturalist and most particularly, his superlative recordings of bird songs.

Monty started as a straight "lister" – like all the young lads back in the day were – but he evolved into a naturalist who explored and appreciated the underlying values and riches of the natural world in a broader way. True to his nature, through the production of both accurate and beautiful audio recordings, he shared that insight and appreciation with so many others. That, at the end of the day, was Monty to the core.



Receiving the 2010 Anne Hanes Award from OFNC President Ann MacKenzie, April 17, 2011. Photo by D. F. Brunton.

Appropriately, reflecting the care, accuracy and comprehensiveness of his record keeping, Monty's bird observation journals will be deposited in the Canadian Museum of Nature in order to make this information available to future researchers. 🐦

Success!

Alfred Bog to become a Provincial Park

Daniel F. Brunton

The April 2018 announcement that the Alfred Bog east of Ottawa was being designated an Ontario Provincial Park (final details still to be determined) caps off what has been the OFNC's most important single conservation action to date. And it only took about 40 years to see that unfold!

The Club did not do it alone, of course – far from it – but working with committed partners on site and elsewhere in eastern Ontario, the OFNC's role was essential in achieving this result. The following article, substantially taken from the longer discussion on the Club's website (ofnc.ca/programs/conservation/alfredbog), summarizes that success.

Appreciating the remarkable flora and fauna of the Alfred Bog:

Top: *Bog Copper* (*Lycaena epixanthe*)

Middle: *Rose Pogonia* (*Pogonia ophioglossoides*)

Bottom: *Topiary Grass-veneer Moth* (*Chrysoteuchia topiarius*)

Photos by Diane Lepage.





When the local municipality decided in 1981 to approve a zoning change that would allow southern Ontario's largest peatland to be mined, perceptive members of the local Vankleek Hill & District Nature Society, especially Leo Durocher and Ernie Beauchesne, protested. They immediately contacted regional allies, including the OFNC (we'd call that "networking" now), and the fight was on. The OFNC bought a 20-ha (50-acre) piece of land in the wetland – the Club's first ever purchase of conservation land – in order to have standing before an Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearing contesting the zoning. Some \$16,000 of scarce conservation money was invested for the hearing. That amount was greatly reduced from what we should have had to pay because the excellent representation provided by George Hunter, well-known legal counsel and a Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society activist, was provided at a generous discount. This was one amongst the first of many personal allowances and sacrifices made by individuals wanting to aid in this protection effort. Despite Hunter's excellent representation and reasonable, fact-based arguments, we lost. It was especially grating to be there in 1983 (as OFNC President I was there to officially represent the appellant group) and hear the OMB Chairman, with no apparent sense of the irony, refer to conservation efforts as "sterilizing" the natural area (*translation: excluding destruction by development*) which could otherwise be "protected"



Map of the Alfred Bog.

Left: A late fall view from the Alfred Bog Boardwalk.
Photo by D. F. Bruntton, November 11, 2005.

(translation: reserved exclusively for commercial exploitation)! While land-use decision-making still has a long way to go in Ontario, we've certainly come a long way from that fossilized attitude of the early 1980s!

The conservation alliance moved on, however, aided immensely by a superb review published by bog expert Don Cuddy (Cuddy 1983). His paper succinctly spelled out the ecological significance and landscape importance of this vast wetland based on extensive personal experience within it. A co-operative fund-raising program was initiated and, in June 1985, The Nature Conservancy of Canada became significantly involved. An Alfred Bog Committee, consisting of over a dozen conservation interests and powered by OFNC President and conservation advocate Frank Pope, began to use donated funds to buy bog property. The agreement of the South Nation Conservation Authority to manage the assembled properties was an important capacity building achievement.



*Tuberous Grass-pink,
Calopogon tuberosus,
in the Alfred Bog,
by Diane Lepage.*

The purchase of a 1,500-ha (3,800-acre) property within the bog in 1988 represented a huge step in the conservation process. The Nature Conservancy applied their remarkable fund-raising and land acquisition skills to make it all happen, with the various conservation partners helping to raise funds to replenish that which the Conservancy had put forward.

Another round of OMB Hearings was required in the 1990s to settle Official Plan development limits, particular development applications and wetland boundaries. The fact that the bog had been determined to represent a Provincially Significant Wetland as well as a Provincially Significant Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (Brunton 1995) increasingly strengthened the conservation value argument throughout that decade.

An immediately (and still) popular boardwalk into the northern edge of the Bog was completed in 1994, greatly increasing public interest in and appreciation for this otherwise difficult-to-access natural landscape. Following the completion of a formal ecological inventory of the bog (Mosquin 1991), a statement of management principles was developed and a management agreement was struck between the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the South Nation Conservation Authority. Showing both tenacity and the patience of Job, Alfred Bog Committee Chairman Frank Pope directed this particular herd of cats towards a common and practical end point – a blueprint for ensuring sustainability and protection for the bog's landscape and for its suite of extraordinary natural features. The Management Plan was completed by the end of 1996. The identification of the bog as protected environmentally significant land in the 1999 United Counties of Prescott & Russell Official Plan was a critically important conservation measure at the end of that decade.

A second huge property (1,300 ha - 3,200 acres) became available in 2001 and the Nature Conservancy again stepped into the negotiation for this critical, if pricey (\$2.5 million), parcel. That pretty much sealed this more than 3,000 ha conservation land assembly effort, a "mere" 20 years after it all began with our 20 ha.

For much of the time since then, the now-named Alfred Bog Nature Reserve has been managed, under direction of the Management Plan, by the South Nation River Conservation Authority. More recently, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry personnel working out of Voyageur Provincial Park have handled habitat protection and conservation enforcement duties.

Not much should change hereafter with the bog designated as a Provincial Nature Reserve Park – as befits an already 10,000-year-old landscape! Except, of course, that its formal Park status should, once and for all, protect this remarkable landscape and its thousands of different kinds of organisms from any commercial exploitation. That grand achievement is a real tribute to the efforts of the Vankleek Hill & District Nature Society, the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the United County of

Tuberous Grass-pink, Calopogon tuberosus, in the Alfred Bog, by Diane Lepage.



Prescott-Russell (especially planner Pierre Mercier), the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry personnel (especially ecologist Don Cuddy) who clarified boundaries and documented values, the South Nation Conservation Authority for management efforts, and the *hundreds* of individuals who made the financial and other contributions required for this to happen.

And through *all* this there was our own Frank Pope, cajoling, scolding, pushing, pulling – whatever it took to keep things moving along. For decades! True, the protection of Alfred Bog could not have been achieved by Frank alone, but despite the important efforts of so many others, it also remains true that it probably could not have been achieved *without* him. What a fine conservation legacy! 🍷



Members of the Alfred Bog Committee being recognized for their efforts by the Board of Directors of the South Nation Conservation Authority on November 18, 2010. From left to right: Bill Radix (Yankleek Hill Nature Society), Ted Mosquin (OFNC), Denis Pommainville (then-mayor of La Nation), Frank Pope (OFNC), Louis Prévost (Director of Planning and Forestry, United Counties of Prescott-Russell) and Brenda VanSleeuwen (Nature Conservancy of Canada). Photographer unknown.

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Five Years of OFNC Members' Nature Photography

Barry Cottam



For five years now, OFNC members have been coming out in enthusiastic numbers to our annual members' photo night. Each year, I have posted a blog note on the OFNC's Field Notes blog pages, which have now been migrated to the new OFNC website. This seems like a good time to mark our fifth with an expanded note in T&L.

Hume Douglas and I have been organizing these evenings each January since 2014. It seemed like a good way to stave off, for an evening at least, the winter blues that the new year can bring. Our event this year, as noted below, came in April – not a bad month either, given our slow spring!

The first event was held on January 18, 2014, at the FWG Interpretation Centre, which was pretty well packed! Eleven presenters set the tone for these events, taking us to local and exotic places and demonstrating the wide range of our members' natural history interests. We moved the next year to larger accommodations at the Neatby Building, where we hold our OFNC monthly meetings. This year we tried something new, as explained in the note below. Over the years, 31 participants have given 56 presentations; almost half the participants, 14 of 31, have returned to present in subsequent years.

Every year, I have been amazed at the diversity of topics and locations: botany, entomology, mammalogy, herpetology, and – no surprise! – ornithology (to use the formal terms) have been highlighted, as well as natural scenes and phenomena, from the equinox to snowflakes.

Photo above: *Yellow-throated Toucan, Finca Estrella, Costa Rica, by Barry Cottam.*

We travelled from members' backyards and gardens through the environs of the National Capital Region – Larose Forest, Alfred Bog, Purdon Fen, Mud Lake, Gatineau Park and our own FWG – to almost every continent. OFNC members are faithful to the local but equally so are a well-travelled bunch, taking trips to Canada's east, north and west, several states in the southern and western US as well as Alaska, and overseas to Africa, Southeast Asia, India, Australia/New Zealand, Costa Rica, Ecuador, including the Galapagos, Cuba, China, France, Sri Lanka, Scotland and Japan. I don't know how many photographs and videos we've seen – very early on we gave up suggesting numbers and now try to estimate allotted time – but all have been interesting, instructive, and high quality.

So, herewith the report on the latest one. Other blog notes can be found at ofnc.ca; enter 'members' photography night' in the search box in the upper right-hand corner and all five notes will turn up.

5th ANNUAL OFNC MEMBERS' PHOTO NIGHT: FROM HERE TO THERE AND BACK AGAIN

The fifth annual OFNC members' photo night almost didn't happen. A last-minute glitch forced cancellation of the initial event, scheduled as usual on a January evening to help ward off the winter blues. But Doug Luoma, one of the presenters, just happens to work in the activities department of Villagia in the Glebe residence. He suggested the ball-room there could accommodate our event and we jumped at the chance. Most of the original presenters booked on and, joined by several others, away we went for an evening that some thought was our best one yet. The ball-room was a lovely venue, with a large screen, podium with mic and light, a projector, laptop and laser pointer. Not to mention coffee, tea, juice and cookies – oh, my!



*Slug on Pipsissewa (Chimaphila umbellata)
at Pinhey Sand Dunes by Diane Lepage.*

And so, on the evening of April 21, fourteen presenters took us to many places through different kinds of photography. We were an eclectic bunch, some first-timers, some veterans, all with a passion for nature and capturing that passion through our photographs and videos. One of the things I enjoy most about these evenings is the surprise, every time, of just how well-travelled and well-versed in local lore our members are. Interests are diverse, and the presentations reflected the passion and knowledge that Club members have of the natural world, whether here in our Ottawa/Gatineau environs or in the various countries they have visited.

We started locally with Annie Bélair and Connie Clark. Annie started out at her backyard bird feeder, in April 2016, when masses of redpolls and Pine Siskins were visiting; she even had a siskin eating out of her hand. We then canoed into the Constance Creek flood zone in 2017, with logs everywhere lined with Northern Map Turtles. Connie injected her

special brand of humour into the evening with a series of critter photos labelled with 'human' expressions – not that she was anthropomorphising, she explained! Jay-Dee Purdie presented "Bees and Birds" – well, that was the title, but she covered many more animals, capturing moods and colours in addition to detailed accounts of the creatures themselves. Club president Diane Lepage is also well-known to members as an amateur expert on moths. And moths there were in her presentation, but many other insects as well, including leaf-hoppers and a colourful net-wing beetle, not to mention fungi and several small, low-lying, easy-to-overlook plants; see opposite page.

Botany was well served by several presenters. Owen Clarkin, the Club's resident expert on all things trees, discussed his discoveries of Red Spruce, previously unrecorded for the Ottawa area. He has perfected a technique for using long-distance photos to identify them, following up with reports to iNaturalist, a site he encouraged us all to use. Eden Bromfield has two objectives, to record the natural world in all its beauty, but especially to follow and record the spring ephemerals at various sites. He sets off his photos of them with a creative use of bokeh. He even included a series showing the movement of a slug off a mushroom cap. Kendra Cann specializes in the wild orchids of Gatineau Park – one can be forgiven for not knowing orchids grew there, but they do, often in delicate and exquisite forms, so easily over-looked, so well captured in Kendra's photos. Each of these presentations demonstrated how the important activities of field naturalists enhanced our knowledge of local biodiversity.



*Cuban Tody, Holguin Province, Cuba,
by Jakob Mueller.*

The travelogues kicked off with two presentations combining local with far-away places. Doug Luoma's "Nature in Motion" video synthesized several tramps around Mud Lake with a trip to Oregon. His dynamic, skilfully edited footage of flickers as well as dragonflies and other creatures got some of us thinking video! Jakob Mueller is particularly interested in reptiles and amphibians. He recounted a September OFNC event at MacSkimming Outdoor Education Centre in Cumberland, held at the right time to find several species of salamander, some common, some rare, all testimony to the wisdom of protecting this tract. His recent trip to Cuba provided shots of various Anole lizards but he was also very fortunate in the birding department, coming home with some great shots of Cuba's endemic birds, including the tiny, hard-to-find, harder-to-photograph Tody. We stayed close to that region, relatively speaking at least, with my presentation of our recent trip to Finca Estrella in southern Costa Rica, across the



Eden Bromfield



ONCE UPON A TIME I FOUND A FAIRY TOILET IN THE WOODS



The Knight



gulf from Osa Peninsula. Birding was as easy as sitting on the deck of our casa with cups of coffee, binoculars and camera at hand. Despite being the dry season, I found new-to-me insect species every day – and night, for they flocked to the house lights. Roy John highlighted several of his trips, from Yellowknife to Baja California, Australia and Japan. Everywhere he went, he met his goals of finding and photographing endemic birds, but also captured marine life in the Baja, including dolphins and whales and the incredible numbers of tiny krill – he brought a net for the purpose! – they dine on. Keith Wickens took us to the Loire Valley, in France. The trip started with his son’s wedding at a castle, but soon he was ensconced in a refurbished cottage to which the birds would flock; he also noted numbers of waterfowl, all identified and researched for our education. Gordon Robertson was on a tour of southeast Asia, including Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. He enjoyed the birds – which were hard to find in one country, owing to the local peoples’ dietary interests – but the butterflies were an even bigger draw, and he treated us to many a colourful creature.



Hard-working paper wasp, Finca Estrella, Costa Rica, by Barry Cottam.

The evening closed out with a silent slideshow from the one presenter who dropped in. He hadn’t registered, owing to a potential conflict with another event; given the numbers of presenters who had, he sat back and enjoyed the evening, which happened to end with enough time left to put on his show. No commentary, just photos of nature, a chance for all of us to relax and contemplate why it is we are out there doing what we do. I didn’t quite catch his name, but thank him here for a perfect end to a full and interesting evening. 🐛

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	9	11

Collage, left:

1. *Hygrocybe* or *Waxcap* mushroom by Eden Bromfield.
2. *Northern Map Turtles* on Constance Creek by Annie Bélair.
3. *Fairy Toilet in the Woods* by Connie Clark.
4. *Red-crested Pochard*, Cheverney, France, by Keith Wickens.
5. *Gecarcinus ruricola*, Holguin Province, Cuba, by Jakob Mueller.
6. *Steller’s Sea Eagle* by Roy John.
7. *Lebadea martha*, Banteay Srey Butterfly Centre, Cambodia, by Gord Robertson.
8. *Phidippus purpuratus* by Doug Luoma.
9. *Large Yellow Lady’s-Slipper* by Kendra Cann.
10. *Red Spruce at Anderson Road* by the 417 by Owen Clarkin.
11. *Cabbage White*, Upper Canada Village, by Jay-Dee Purdie.



Have Native Terrestrial Snails and Slugs Declined in the Ottawa Valley?

Evidence from Billings Bush

Paul M. Catling and Brenda Kostiuk

A project supported in part by the 2017 OFNC Research Grants Program.

Invertebrate species are 99% of animal diversity, but they attract a relatively small percentage of our attention (Lydeard et al. 2004). Of the invertebrates, the terrestrial molluscs (land snails and land slugs) include 60,000 species, 1,222 of which are included in IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) Red List of Threatened Species (www.redlist.org); since the year 1500, approximately 42% of the 693 animal extinctions recorded are molluscs, most of which are terrestrial species (Lydeard et al. 2004). Although one of the least studied animal groups, the snails and slugs are one of the most diverse, most imperilled, and most ecologically important groups of biological indicators.

Possibly due to a lack of information, they have not been used extensively in some helpful evaluations of global biodiversity (e.g. Butchart et al. 2010). During a recent snail and slug identification workshop, these global suggestions of decline, importance, and lack of information raised the question of how much is known of their status in the Ottawa Valley.

Two recent evaluations

Two studies in particular have helped to evaluate the status of species of snails and slugs in Ontario. Nekola's (2009) work was a very important first step that indicated clearly that not enough was known to enable reliable decisions on status in many cases. Fast forward to the very helpful *Wild Species 2015* (Canadian Endangered Species Conservation Council, 2016). Of the 136 terrestrial snails and slugs in Ontario, 28 are listed as "not applicable" on account of being introduced. The number of introduced species is likely 32 or more, which leaves 104 species of native terrestrial molluscs in the list. Of these, 19 (18.3%) are unrankable due to insufficient information. That leaves 83.

Photo above: *The Forest Disc* (*Discus whitneyi*, this one 4.3 mm across) was abundant at Billings Bush in 1885 but not found in 2017. Photo by P.M. Catling (2017) in Gatineau Park, Quebec, October 26, 2017. Complete photo on page 172.

Of these rankable species, 46 (43.2%) are in a risk category (vulnerable, imperilled, or critically imperilled) and 41 are secure (39.4%). Reptiles are one of the few other groups in Ontario for which the majority of native species are known to be in a risk category. Of the Ontario snails and slugs in the “secure” category, most (33 of the 41) are “apparently secure ... with possible cause for concern.” Information on status is still insufficient for $19 + 33 = 52 = 50\%$.

The Ottawa Valley

For the Ottawa Valley, there are no “before and after” studies to provide a satisfactory analysis of decline. There is anecdotal information. This includes lack of recent observations of certain species that were seen more often in the past. Decline is also suggested by the loss of woodland habitat, and particularly the loss of forest litter due to European earthworms (e.g. Hale et al. 2005; Dobson 2017). Introduced snails and slugs have also been increasingly associated with the decline of native species in northeastern North America and worldwide (e.g. Mahlfield 2000) and there are numerous other reasons to suspect decline, such as acid precipitation (Pearce and Arnold 2016) and introduced predacious beetles (see Barker 2004).

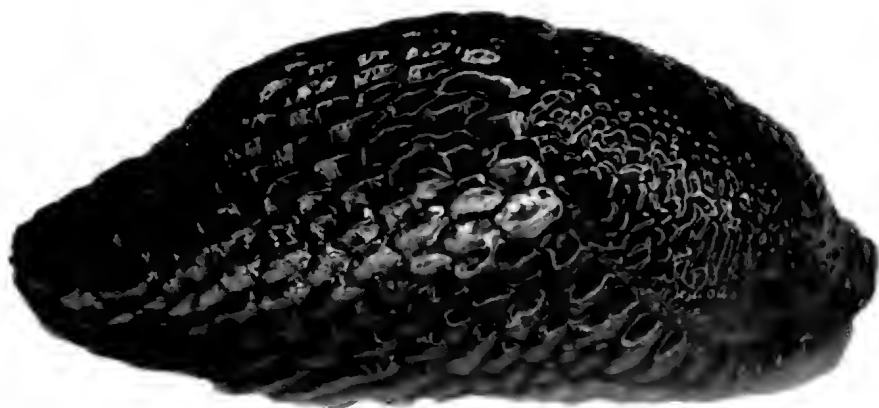
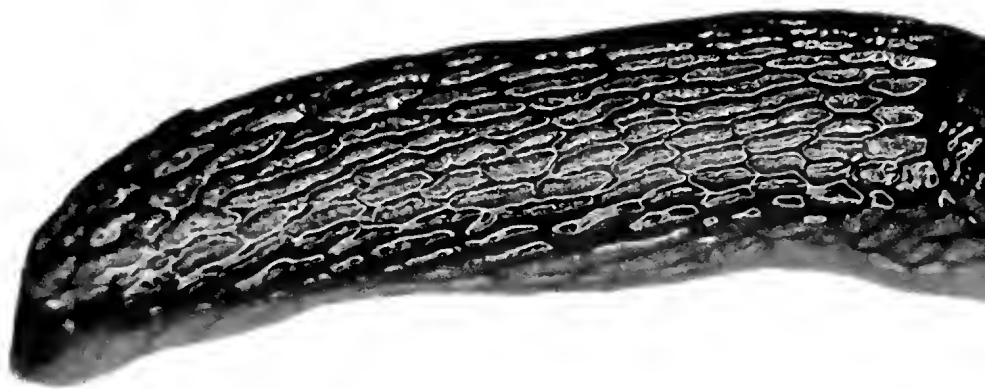
However, there is some before and after evidence from the Ottawa Valley that can be applied when considering the possible causes of the decline. Part of this evidence is the comparison of the snail and slug fauna of Billings Bush in 1885 with that of 2017.

The record from Billings Bush

Billings Bush is a remnant of climax forest on the Billings Estate near Billings Bridge in Ottawa (see Appendix 1). The situation at Billings Bush, where some of the native snails and slugs present were reported in 1885, and where there is evidence for persistence of a mature Sugar Maple-American Beech forest from before 1885 continuously to the present, provides for a before and after snapshot in a continuously available woodland habitat.

A Supreme Court Chief Justice, Francis Robert Latchford, published his “Observations on the terrestrial mollusca of Ottawa and vicinity” in 1885 (in a predecessor of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*). One of the many very valuable aspects of this annotated list was the fact that he often mentioned some locations, especially for less common species. Billings Bush was mentioned for 10 species (Table 1). Other species were not noted at Billings Bush because they were absent from his “Ottawa and vicinity” list. Thus, with a current survey, it is possible to determine which of the 10 species listed in 1885 are still present and which other species have newly colonized the area as a result of their being absent from the total area list of 1885. Some before and after data is therefore possible for a single location. Although we may not know all of the species that existed there in 1885, we can obtain a reliable picture of the present snail and slug fauna for an informative partial comparison.

Only two Latchford collections (see Appendix 2) from Billings Bush were found in a search of museums, both of which were *Discus whitneyi*. They were at the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology (UMMZ) (sub *D. cronkhitei*) and at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) (sub *Patula striatella*). Thus only the reports (Latchford 1885) with one species vouchered are available for comparison. Interestingly, Latchford noted of this single vouchered species that “... in such stations as Billings Bush and elsewhere, I have taken it in great numbers in late autumn and early spring” Latchford (1885, p. 216). All of those species reported for Billings Bush by Latchford in 1885 are native.



The Garden Arion (*Arion hortensis*), 2-3 cm long, was the most common slug found at Billings Bush in 2017.



Top: extended slug.
Middle: contracted shape.
Bottom: from below, showing orange sole and deep orange sole mucus.

Photos by P.M. Catling
taken in Gatineau Park,
Quebec, near
Boulevard des
Allumetières
(2016).

Table 1. Species reported and collected from Billings Bush by Latchford in 1885. None are introduced or possibly introduced.

<i>Glyphyalinia indentata</i> (Say, 1823), CARVED GLYPH (as <i>Hyalina indentata</i>)
<i>Nesovitrea binneyana</i> (Morse, 1864), BLUE GLASS (as <i>Hyalina binneyana</i>)
<i>Striatura exigua</i> (Simpson, 1850), RIBBED STRIATE (as <i>Pseudohyalina exigua</i>)
<i>Striatura milium</i> (Morse, 1859), FINE-RIBBED STRIATE
<i>Discus whitneyi</i> (Newcomb, 1864), FOREST DISC (Collection at ROM (as <i>Patula striatella</i>) and UMMZ (as <i>Discus cronkhitei</i>))
<i>Helicodiscus parallelus</i> (Say, 1817), COMPOUND COIL (as <i>H. lineatus</i>)
<i>Gastrocopta corticaria</i> (Say, 1816), BARK SNAGGLETOTH
<i>Vertigo milium</i> (Gould, 1840), BLADE VERTIGO
<i>Columella simplex</i> (Gould, 1840), SIMPLE COLUMN (as <i>Vertigo simplex</i>)
<i>Mediappendix vermeta</i> (Say, 1829), SUBOVAL AMBERSNAIL (as <i>Succinea avara</i>)

A modern field Survey of Billings Bush: an extraordinary decline

A total of 15 hours was spent searching for snails and slugs in Billings Bush. These searches took place in September 2016 and April, May, September and November 2017. Each of the five visits to the area was of approximately 3 hours in duration. The searching technique involved looking under leaves, logs, rocks and other debris for snails of various sizes, from 1 mm to over 30 mm in diameter. Most of the area was without litter, but seven samples of litter, each two handfuls, were collected to check for smaller litter-inhabiting snails. All snails and slugs found were identified using standard texts and websites (e.g. Pilsbry 1939, 1940, 1946, 1948, Burch 1962, Kerney and Cameron 1979, Grimm et al. 2010, Hotopp et al. 2013, Rowson et al. 2014). The 1885 fauna of Billings Bush, including 10 species listed by Latchford (1885, Table 1), was compared with the results of this recent survey (Table 2).

Snails and slugs found in Billings Bush in 2016-2017 (Table 2) are mostly introduced and represent a quite different terrestrial gastropod fauna from that reported by Latchford (cf. Tables 1 and 2). In terms of numbers of individuals, there is a very strong domination of introduced species in the recent survey. Of the twenty species found, 15 (75%) were introduced. On the basis of all individuals (including empty shells), 6.6% were native individuals. On the basis of only living individuals, native individuals were 1.3%.

None of the species reported in 1885 were found in the 2016-2017 survey and in particular, the one vouchered species, *Discus whitneyi*, formerly very abundant, was not found in 2016-2017. There has clearly been an extraordinary decline of native species at Billings Bush and it may be much more widespread (see Appendices 3 and 4).

Not just forest destruction

In early settlement times, wood was removed to accommodate agriculture, as well as for heating, cooking and fuel. This created a treeless landscape far outside towns. Today, some of this previously treeless landscape has redeveloped forest with large trees, which we sometimes call “secondary forest”. This kind of young forest has not had time to develop a full complement of pre-cutting diversity and may never do so, because of the changed conditions resulting from the establishment of invasive aliens. It is sometimes hard to imagine that some forests are young and incomplete, but in understanding biodiversity it is necessary to make a distinction between pristine forest which may have retained its high biodiversity and secondary forest which has not yet developed it. However, at Billings Bush, the decline evidently occurred without the destruction of the forest. Thus we tend to think of impacts in addition to habitat loss, one of which is the impact of invasives.



The Costate Vallonia (Vallonia costata), 2-3 mm across, was the most common live snail found at Billings Bush in 2017. Photo by P.M. Catling taken in Gatineau Park, Quebec, during the OFNC snail workshop on Sept. 16, 2017. (See “Mostly Alien Gastropods Found in Gatineau Park Workshop” in Trail & Landscape 52(2), April-June 2018.)

Table 2.

Gastropods recorded in 2016 and 2017 visits to Billings Bush with numbers of living and dead (empty shells) individuals. All species indicated as "introduced" were not present in 1885 (since not on Latchford's regional list of 1885).

* = Holarctic species (based on Kerney & Cameron 1979) characteristically synanthropic and possibly introduced.

+ = Native to North America but introduced in the Ottawa area (Catling and Kostiuk 2017) or in the case of *Deroceras reticulatum*, found only in one place in Ottawa in 1885 and not found during many surveys of Billings Bush (Latchford 1885).

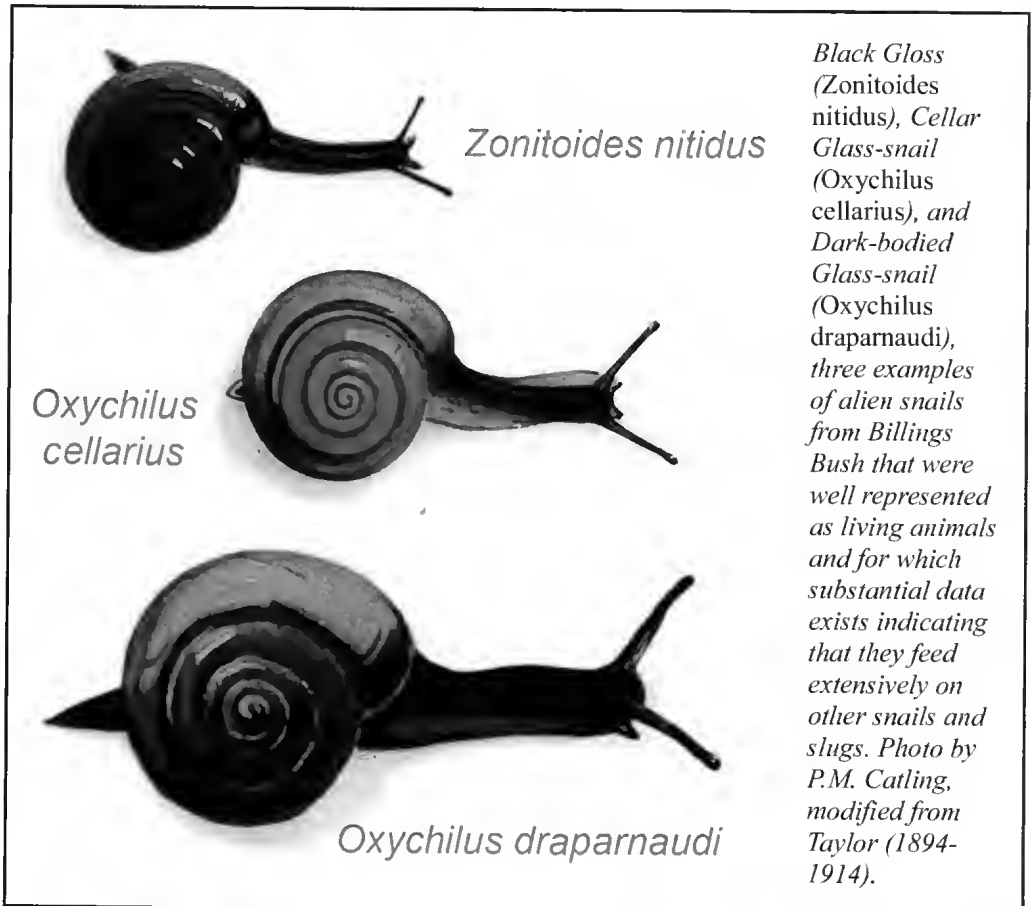
The name *Succinea putris* is bracketed because the living material was not satisfactory for a fully reliable dissection-based identification.

Species Name	Intr.	No. living	No. dead
<i>Anguispira alternata</i> (Say 1817), FLAMED TIGERSNAIL			14
<i>Arion fasciatus</i> (Nilsson, 1823), ORANGE-BANDED ARION	√	3	
<i>Arion hortensis</i> (Férussac 1819), GARDEN ARION	√	54	
<i>Cepaea nemoralis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758), GROVE SNAIL	√		4
<i>Cochlicopa lubrica</i> (Müller, 1774), GLOSSY PILLAR	√*	3	15
<i>Deroceras laeve</i> (Müller, 1774), MEADOW SLUG	√*	40	
<i>Deroceras reticulatum</i> (Müller, 1774), GREY FIELD SLUG	√	2	
<i>Gastrocopta holzingeri</i> (Sterki, 1889) LAMBDA SNAGGLETEOTH		1	
<i>Gastrocopta pentodon</i> (Say, 1882), COMB SNAGGLETEOTH		2	
<i>Hawaiiia minuscula</i> (A. Binney, 1841), SOUTHEASTERN GEM			1
<i>Oxychilus alliarius</i> (Miller, 1822), GARLIC GLASS-SNAIL	√		1
<i>Oxychilus cellarius</i> (Müller, 1774), CELLAR GLASS-SNAIL	√	17	9
<i>Oxychilus draparnandi</i> (Beck, 1837), DARK-BODIED GLASS-SNAIL	√	7	11
<i>Pupilla muscorum</i> (Linnaeus, 1758), WIDESPREAD COLUMN	√+	1	
(<i>Succinea putris</i> (Linnaeus, 1758) EUROPEAN AMBERSNAIL)	√	2	10
<i>Trochulus hispidus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758), HAIRY HELICID	√	7	140
<i>Vallonia costata</i> (Müller, 1774), COSTATE VALLONIA	√*	70	21
<i>Vallonia pulchella</i> (Müller, 1774), LOVELY VALLONIA	√*	2	2
<i>Zonitoides arboreus</i> (Say, 1817), QUICK GLOSS			5
<i>Zonitoides nitidus</i> (Müller, 1774), BLACK GLOSS	√*	27	1
<i>Zonitoides</i> sp			8
TOTALS		238	228

Impacts of introduced snails and slugs

Some biologists have noticed that where introduced snails and slugs have become established, the native species have declined (e.g. Mahlfield 2000). The replacement of the native fauna by the introduced fauna in persisting woodland at Billings Bush is a good example of this relationship. It may be due to competition for food and space and/or a result of direct interaction involving predation and/or introduction of disease, or all of these, or the aliens may have moved into an unoccupied space. *Oxychilus cellarius*, *O. draparnaudi*, and *Zonitoides nitidus* (see illustration below), all present in Billings Bush in relatively large numbers as adults, have been widely reported to be carnivorous, feeding on other snails, slugs and their eggs (e.g. Frest and Sanders Rhodes 1982; Mahlfield 2000; Barker and Efford 2004). They may have eliminated native species by predation.

It is of interest that the same species of invasive terrestrial snails and slugs present in Billings Bush are associated with the declines of native species elsewhere. In New Zealand for example, *Cochlicopa lubrica* and *Arion hortensis* are among the most common species where native species have declined, and both of the aforementioned species of *Oxychilus* are also present along with *Limax maximus* and *Deroceras reticulatum*. For decades, ecologists have suggested that extinctions and invasive alien impacts would lead to global homogeneity, but did we think that Canada and New Zealand would develop a new and similar snail and slug fauna?



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Appendix 1

More about Billings Bush

Billings Bush (45.3879, -75.67214) was (and is) southeast of the Billings House (Reddoch, 1979) on lands owned by the Billings family (Gover 1986) which are shown in Belden's (1879) atlas. In 1885, when electricity arrived in Ottawa, the small community of Billings Bridge, as well as Billings Bush, were at least 2 km outside Ottawa, the population of which was between 25,000 and 30,000 people. The site became a popular place to study natural history in the late 1800s, and was accessible by a regular stage coach from the Ottawa Post Office Dept. in what is now Confederation Square (Kemp 1991). In Latchford's (1885) list, it is clear that he visited Billings Bush on many occasions, since he refers to the site as being "searched during several years" (Latchford 1885, p. 214) and mentions it ten times, which is more than any other location.

It seems likely that the bush included the steep ravines around the Billings Estate graveyard northwest of the railway, and also other ravines with and without springs and creeks and drier land on the plateau southeast of the railway. The original area was likely at least 12 acres. Although extensive wooded areas owned by the Billings family

(including what is now Pleasant Park) existed up to a few kilometres to the west, these areas were not likely part of the destination called “Billings Bush”.

The remnants of Billings Bush now include 1.5 acres of mature woodland northwest of the Transitway and railway beside the graveyard and 2 acres to the southeast of these routes north of the Couvent Jean-Paul II. The woodland is currently dominated by mature Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) and Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*). This mature woodland is believed to have been preserved since the land was settled by Billings in 1812 (Gover 1986). The size of both living and dead trees, and the references to bush in the early days, suggest a continuity of forest. It has been described as “the only area of the estate continuously treed from pre-settlement times” (Findlay 2001), and its protection over a long period by the Billings family is confirmed by Billings Estate historian Brahm Lewandoski. It is likely that the woodland was preserved to promote a peaceful resting place adjacent to the graveyard, and because the steep ravines prevented other uses.



A portion of Billings Bush. Photo by P.M. Catling on May 23, 2017.

Further evidence of the continuity of this isolated patch of mature woodland is the presence of a thriving colony (over 50 seen in 6 hours) of Red-backed Salamanders (*Plethodon cinereus*, all “lead-backed” colour phase), characteristically a woodland species, suggesting a retention of dampness in the ravines, where springs and streams are still present, and a continuity of mesic conditions. Thus some major elements of the habitat, although diminished in size, appear to have existed since the time of Latchford’s visits up to the present.

Appendix 2

Latchford's Collections

It would be desirable to increase the 1885 list through the use of specimens collected by Latchford. His specimens went to the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto (ROM), but when the ROM did not have sufficient funds to curate the collection, Curator John Oughton made arrangements for the specimens to be sent to the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology (UMMZ) to ensure their protection. Some of the Latchford collections were later returned to the ROM. Both of these museums, as well as the Canadian Museum of Nature (CMN), were searched for specimens from Billings Bush collected by Latchford, in order to enable a more complete comparison, but little was found (see above). Ms. Maureen Zubowski of the Royal Ontario Museum kindly checked

the ROM for Latchford collections from Billings Bush. Dr. Tachwan Lee did the same at the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, and checked a list of likely species. Dr. Jean-Marc Gagnon confirmed that there were no Latchford specimens from Billings Bush at the Canadian Museum of Nature.

Appendix 3

Extent of decline

Preliminary observations suggest that the decline is much more widespread. Within Ottawa alone, old-growth woodlands have a snail and slug fauna strongly dominated by introduced species (personal observation 2017). The decline appears also to have occurred in some relatively remote and protected areas (e.g. Catling and Kostiuk 2017). This is not surprising, with unused earthworms for fishing bait being discarded in wilderness areas where they establish and eliminate the litter layer. In addition, plantings and building materials with alien species of snails and slugs are transported to areas around cottages, campsites, picnic areas, boat launches, and on vehicles, especially those used for road construction.

Appendix 4

Discus whitneyi

Latchford's specimens, referred to above as *Discus whitneyi*, have not been examined by us; we are not able to revise members of this group at the present time. It seems unlikely that they are *D. patulus* and/or *D. catskillensis*. All of these species are similarly small (4-8 mm wide), with a broad umbilicus and strong radial ribs. Since no snails fitting this description were found during the recent survey, we have evidence that whatever *Discus* species it was that was present at Billings Bush, it is no longer there. ■



The Forest Disc (Discus whitneyi, this one 4.3 mm across) was abundant at Billings Bush in 1885 but not found in 2017. Photo by P.M. Catling in Gatineau Park, Quebec, October 26, 2017.

Results of the 2018 OFNC Research Grants Program to Support Local Natural Sciences Research

OFNC Publications Committee

In March 2015, the OFNC Board of Directors approved a motion that the club establish an OFNC Research Grants program to support field-based natural science research projects in eastern Ontario and western Quebec. This new program aligns perfectly with one of the main goals of the OFNC: to encourage investigation, publish the results of research in all fields of natural history, and diffuse the information as widely as possible. Up to \$15,000 is available for research projects each year. The funding must go to individuals, not organizations, and the funding cannot be used for salary. The research grants program is overseen by the OFNC Publications Committee.

The Club's 2018 call for proposals was sent out widely in November 2017 with a deadline of January 15, 2018 for submitting a proposal. Nine proposals were received this year. A small subcommittee, convened and chaired by Dr. Tony Gaston, reviewed all proposals and recommended funding eight of them. The funding recommendations were submitted to the Board of Directors, who approved all of them. The following projects, listed in alphabetical order, were funded this year:

1. Cécile Antoine. University of Ottawa. Comparing soil characteristics to improve the habitat and the abundance of ground-nesting bees in Ottawa's farming areas.
2. Dominic Demers. University of Ottawa. The abundance and diversity of cavity-nesting bees in agroecosystems.
3. Jesse Fortier. University of Ottawa. Urban pond characteristics impacting pollinator abundance and diversity.
4. Lauren Hooten. Trent University. Using capture rates at eastern Ontario swarming sites to estimate population levels of bat species at risk in Ontario.
5. Francesco Janzen. University of Ottawa. The roles of genetic determinism and environmental pressure in migratory homing behaviour of Channel Catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*, Actinopterygii).
6. Elena Ponomarenko. University of Ottawa. The origins of the Stony Swamp alvars: the fire story.
7. Alicia Rochette. Carleton University. Is the noctuid moth *Hypena opulenta* a suitable biological control agent to effectively reduce Dog-strangling Vine populations across Ontario?
8. David Seburn. Canadian Wildlife Federation. Confirming the apparent widespread decline of the threatened Western Chorus Frog in eastern Ontario.

As a condition of receiving support from the OFNC Research Fund, all grant recipients are expected to submit a summary of their work for publication in *Trail & Landscape*. Stay tuned to learn about the results of these exciting and important local research projects. 🦋

Juvenile Least Sandpiper at Chrysler, August 7, 2014.
Photo by Jacques Bouvier.





How to Find **250**
Bird Species
in the
OFNC Study Area
in a
Single Year

**Part 3: July to
September**

Gregory Zbitnew

CONTENTS OF PART 3

- a. Introduction
 - b. How has the year 2018 progressed so far?
 - c. Key activities during this period.
 - d. Important target birds
 - e. Catching up on previous misses
 - f. The summer doldrums
 - g. Migration begins
 - h. The peak of migration
 - i. Longing for the shorebirds
 - j. Farewell to the summer songbirds
 - k. Some closing remarks.
-

INTRODUCTION

In 1977, a series of articles in *Trail & Landscape* described a strategy to see 200 bird species within the OFNC study area (which is the circle of a 50-kilometer radius centered on the Peace Tower, also called the 50K) in a single year. This, the third of a series of four articles providing an update/rewrite of that series, covers the period from July to September.

All the introductory material in the first two articles (published in T&L Volume 52, Numbers 1 and 2) is still relevant to this article, and if you haven't yet started your "big year" and plan to start one, it is highly recommended that you read it.

I have heard that a group of birders who bird once a week has plans, next year, to follow the recommended strategy in this series of articles. So, if you had not planned for a "big year" this year, there is always next year.

I will repeat the key points from that first article:

1. You should chase a rarity as soon as possible. The rarity *might* stay for weeks, but it is more likely to be gone the next day, or even the next hour.
2. Cover all the major habitats/areas at the prime time, if this is all you can do. Article #3 will describe the key habitats/times for July-September.
3. Focus your birding efforts on the uncommon-rare species, the "target" birds.
4. You should take full advantage of the very best birding tool available, which is an online database of bird sightings called eBird (www.ebird.org), to find the most up-to-date information on what is being seen and what is expected. Most of the OFNC's weekly report, issued every Thursday on ofnc.ca, is based on information from eBird.
5. Take advantage of birding information on the OFNC website (ofnc.ca), such as birding areas and the 1993 OFNC checklist.
6. Take advantage, as appropriate, of local birding guides, free field trips, and friendly local birders you see in the field. The sightings email (sightings@ofnc.ca) or identifications email (identifications@ofnc.ca) can offer advice and species identification tips.

HOW HAS THE YEAR 2018 PROGRESSED SO FAR?

How has the birding year progressed in 2018, as of “press time” in late April? I gave a lot of suggestions in Part 1 and Part 2. How good were they?

Of the target birds listed for January-March, 26 of the 29 have been seen, plus 9 of the 10 owl species.

Missing, however, have been HARLEQUIN DUCK (possible in the fall), AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER (perhaps next winter), and HOARY REDPOLL (possibly next winter).

Of the birds listed for April-June, 23 of the 53 have been seen to date, but most of that group would not be expected until later in the year.

For the region, a cumulative 170 species had been seen by the end of April, with a few birders seeing over 130 species to date. Some significant rarities showed up in late April: SNOWY EGRET, RUFF, BLUE-WINGED WARBLER, and a first record for the 50K, a NEOTROPIC CORMORANT.

A late February thaw like last year brought a few early arrivals, and like last year, it was followed by a March cold snap. Modest flooding in the east brought good numbers of SNOW GEESE into the region, but not as many as some previous years. There was a reasonable number of the rarer geese. April was one of the worst in decades, and migration was significantly delayed until it improved markedly in the last week.

Only modest numbers of both CROSSBILL species were seen, and they were never widespread. REDPOLLS and PINE GROSBEAKS were almost non-existent. There is still next winter to find the WINTER FINCHES.



*Red-eyed Vireo, Larose Forest, July 14, 2010.
Photo by J. Bouvier.*

BIRDING FROM JULY TO SEPTEMBER

KEY ACTIVITIES DURING THIS PERIOD

1. You can relax a bit during July, since it is a rather inactive month for migration. Your focus would be on finding any of the nesting species you have not seen yet, particularly ones that become much harder to find later in the season.
2. In about early to mid-August, start looking for any missing SHOREBIRDS. The areas to visit depend critically on water levels, so your best bet is to monitor the weekly OFNC report and eBird to find out where birds are being seen.
3. In about mid-August, fall migration is in full swing, so it is time to start checking the migrant traps regularly.
4. Starting late September, look for NELSON'S SPARROW in the phragmites (tall grass-like vegetation) on the Ottawa River from about Ottawa Beach to Constance Bay.
5. In September, start visiting the Ottawa River for PARASITIC JAEGER.

IMPORTANT TARGET BIRDS

The introduction to this section is the same as in Part 2, so it is recommended that you re-read that section. As stated there, the list that follows includes the important birds to target during this period. They almost always occur in our area every year during this time, but are harder to find/easier to miss, so you should focus your efforts on finding these birds, and in the process you will see the more common ones. Even in this list, some are more difficult to find than others, so a * identifies that species as more difficult to find than the others.

The following is found on the Ottawa River:

1. *PARASITIC JAEGER (Ottawa River)

The following are found in shorebird habitat (see text for an explanation):

2. AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER
3. *WHIMBREL
4. *HUDSONIAN GODWIT (This species tends to peak a bit later in the year)
5. *RUDDY TURNSTONE (This species is more often seen on rocky habitat on the river)
6. SANDERLING
7. WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER
8. *BAIRD'S SANDPIPER
9. *STILT SANDPIPER
10. *LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER
11. *RED-NECKED PHALAROPE

These are found in woodland habitat/migrant traps:

12. GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH
13. *ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER
14. *YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER
15. *OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER

This bird has very local habitat.

See the text for details:

16. *NELSON'S SPARROW

Last year, all of these birds were seen during the year, 15 of them during July-September, and one in October.



*Juvenile light-morph Parasitic Jaeger.
Ottawa, September 18, 2015.
Photo by Jacques Bouvier.*

CATCHING UP ON PREVIOUS MISSES

These are the target birds mentioned in Part 2 that you can still find in July-September:

1. AMERICAN BITTERN
2. *LEAST BITTERN
3. BROAD-WINGED HAWK
4. VIRGINIA RAIL
5. SORA
6. *UPLAND SANDPIPER
7. *WILSON'S PHALAROPE
8. *SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER
9. BLACK TERN
10. COMMON TERN
11. CASPIAN TERN
12. *YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO
13. BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO
14. COMMON NIGHTHAWK (Note: often they are seen migrating in small flocks at dusk starting about mid-August)
15. EASTERN WHIP-POOR-WILL
16. RED-HEADED WOODPECKER
17. WILLOW FLYCATCHER (Note: these are very hard to separate from ALDER FLYCATCHER if they do not call)
18. *YELLOW-THROATED VIREO
19. PHILADELPHIA VIREO
20. NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (Note: Often large flocks of mixed species of SWALLOWS are seen by the river and inland ponds starting about mid-August)
21. BANK SWALLOW
22. CLIFF SWALLOW
23. *SEDGE WREN
24. MARSH WREN
25. *BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER
26. NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH
27. *GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (Note: rarely seen in migration)
28. MOURNING WARBLER
29. CANADA WARBLER
30. GRASSHOPPER SPARROW
31. CLAY-COLORED SPARROW
32. VESPER SPARROW
33. *EASTERN TOWHEE (Note: this species usually sticks around in its nesting grounds well into September)
34. INDIGO BUNTING

In fact, if you have missed some of the birds on this list, you really need to be looking for them during this period, since they will almost certainly have departed by the end of September. With any luck you will not have missed many of them. As in the previous list, a * identifies that species as more difficult to find than the others.

Refer to Part 2 or the 1993 OFNC checklist for details on suitable habitat and whether they are nesting or only migrants. You can find the nesting birds in July. If any of the misses are strictly migrants, start looking for them after July. Of the birds on this list, virtually all were seen last year during July-September.



Blue-headed Vireo in Larose Forest, July 14, 2010. Photo by Jacques Bouvier.

THE SUMMER DOLDRUMS

Very active birders will probably have reached 90% of their yearly tally of species by the end of June. Less active birders will have missed some to a lot of the birds, but fortunately they have a lot of time to “catch up” during the month of July. July is not very active for migration, being perhaps the least active month after January. However, unlike January, there are a lot of birds around. Nesting is still in progress, and there are many young which cannot yet travel very far.

The 50K has records of 170+ nesting species of birds, although for some of them there are very few records. Almost all of those species will be present during the entire month. Identify the missing birds that nest in the region and their suitable habitat. Focus your efforts this month on the major nesting areas where the birds identified in Part 2 are present.

As was also mentioned in Part 2, expect to do a bit of travelling since the best areas are not particularly close to the urban core. This is certainly the time to look in more obscure, untrodden areas, for you never know what may be lurking there, although the chances of finding a rarity are small, of course. In July, there is always some place you can look, and it is recommended that you do so. What could be a better thing to do than spend a warm July morning in the forest?

Also, don't forget to use eBird to find recent sightings. Early in July there can still be quite a bit of birdsong, especially very early in the morning. With the long days and the generally favourable weather conditions, late evening can also be a productive time to find birds.

MIGRATION BEGINS

Rare birds do show up even in July. Perhaps more importantly in terms of finding them, out-of-place birds can survive quite well almost anywhere here in the summer, unlike in the winter when they are tied to feeders or very restricted areas like open water. A rare bird could potentially have settled in a less popular area for 4-8 weeks by the time July rolls around. If nobody visits the area, it will never be found.

One phenomenon to remember at this time is “post-breeding dispersal”. Particularly among wading birds, many species disperse or wander to some degree after breeding, sometimes quite a bit north, east or west, before going to their regular wintering grounds in the fall. So some birds that do not nest here, like CASPIAN TERN, may become quite a bit more common during the summer.

While July as a whole has little migration, it slowly and steadily builds up during the course of the month. By early to mid-August it has become noticeable, and this is really the point when you have to start paying attention to migration.



Pied-billed Grebe with young at the Embrun Sewage Lagoons, August 22, 2013.

Photo by Jacques Bouvier.

THE PEAK OF MIGRATION

Migration is an all-encompassing term and every species of bird follows its own pattern. Fall migration in general really lasts six months (July-December), but for some species they are here and gone in a matter of weeks. You need to check the 1993 OFNC checklist for the seasonal status of each species you are looking for.

Fall migration is also more drawn out for birds. There is not the spring rush to get to the nesting grounds. Also, adults and young often follow a different schedule, and the plumage differences in the fall are well known.

*Sabine's Gull in breeding plumage
over the Ottawa River near the
Britannia Conservation Area,
September 25, 2013.
Photo by Jacques Bouvier.*



Generally speaking, the peak time for the insect eaters is late August-early September. This includes most of the songbirds and the flycatchers. Shorebird peak is about the same time, while the seed- and fruit-eaters peak much later. So in terms of sheer numbers and variety of species, this is definitely the peak time.

For nesting species near the northern edge of their range, like GRASSHOPPER SPARROW, you will simply notice that they quickly disappear, while other species with a large nesting range to the north will have some dramatic population peaks.

By mid-August, and especially in late August and early September, there is the potential for significant “fallouts”, similar in concept to those in the spring, meaning that varying weather conditions can result in a huge influx of birds. In the fall, the major differences are that northerly winds, not southerly ones, will bring the influx, and that the fallouts are not as dramatic as in the spring. Just like in the spring, storms can temporarily ground birds like SHOREBIRDS. This is now the time to head back to the migrant traps like Britannia, which can be truly excellent at this time of the year, or truly dead in the depths of a late summer heat wave.

For east-enders who are a bit miffed that Britannia takes all the migration glory, I can honestly say that Petrie Island is an excellent place for migrants at this time of year, as are the woods along the Ottawa River from there to about Bilberry Creek. Undoubtedly the woods on the north side of the river in Quebec are comparable.

I also want to remind everyone that during the peak of migration, migrants can show up even in your backyard, so never stop looking.

The peak of migration is also the time for real rarities to show up, so be prepared to look as soon as possible when a rarity is reported. Last year, two major rarities showed up in September: SABINE’S GULL and PROTHONOTARY WARBLER.

LONGING FOR THE SHOREBIRDS

Special attention will now be given to SHOREBIRDS. For most SHOREBIRDS in the region, the fall is a better time to find them. Migration is more drawn out, there are more birds (many of them young), and under ideal circumstances, habitat is far more suitable.



Moulting Semipalmated Sandpiper, below the Crysler Dam, August 7, 2014. Photo by Jacques Bouvier.

Starting in early August, birders carefully monitor the water levels of the Ottawa River, longing for the perfect conditions, which seem to happen rather rarely. So most of the species in the “target list” are SHOREBIRDS, and all of them, more or less, can be found in the same general habitat.

Under ideal conditions, the mudflats west of the Shirley's Bay causeway can host hundreds of SHOREBIRDS, and 27 species may be seen during the season. On the very best days, 15 or more species may be seen. The best days for SHOREBIRDS also require good weather conditions, like northerly winds and somewhat inclement weather.

Under conditions of low water, mudflats can be exposed from about Andrew Haydon Park almost to Britannia Pier. There is more limited habitat on the rocky areas east and west of the Champlain Bridge. Unfortunately, the Ottawa River east of about Parkdale Avenue has very little suitable habitat. In the east, the best useful spot on the Ottawa River is west of the causeway at Petrie Island, but that area is quite limited and much more prone to being covered in higher water. Virtually all of the Ottawa River in Quebec has very little habitat, unfortunately, but in conditions of very low water there are some exposed areas of shoreline there.

Needless to say, ideal conditions are not the norm and are often quite temporary. Excellent habitat can disappear after a single heavy rainfall or following some adjustment in one of the dams upriver. So when conditions are good, you need to go to the good habitat as soon as possible.

An area which is now becoming quite good is the Carp River reclamation area (in Kanata), the best spot in the region when the Ottawa River is high. Other spots along the Carp River, and to a lesser extent any of the new storm water ponds dotting the city, have the potential for hosting shorebirds. Last year, one such pond near the Carp River hosted a HUDSONIAN GODWIT for several weeks, and an obscure spot in south Kanata had a LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER for a few days. I had mentioned in the last article that



*Juvenile Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Andrew Haydon Park, Ottawa
September 1, 2012. Photo by Jacques Bouvier.*

the sewage lagoons have declined in quality/and or also have access issues, although the Almonte Lagoons are visible via an observation tower, and the former Richmond Lagoons are now a conservation area.

Birders need to be creative when looking for shorebird habitat. The edges of some inland ponds, like on Moodie Drive and Giroux Road, are sometimes productive, as are flooded fields. The turf farms south of Ottawa can be quite active at times during and after heavy rain.

The other thing that needs to be remembered is that shorebirds, particularly the larger ones, are quite strong flyers and usually keep flying if conditions are suitable. A storm or bad weather has the potential to ground a few or large numbers of birds temporarily, so unfortunately, if you are really keen, you may have to hit the field in bad weather conditions.

Two species in particular, BAIRD'S and STILT SANDPIPER, are easy to miss even when they are around. They are not rare, just very uncommon, but they are mentioned not just because they come through in rather small numbers earlier in the season, but because they are smaller and have more subtle field marks.



*Juvenile Pectoral Sandpiper near Crysler, August 7, 2014.
Photo by Jacques Bouvier.*

Keep looking for SHOREBIRDS throughout September. Like all birds, each species follows its own schedule. Some have left by the end of September, while others are at their peak.

FAREWELL TO THE SUMMER SONGBIRDS

After early September, it will become quite apparent that many of the bird species are disappearing for the season. If you are missing anything on the target list by early September, your window of opportunity is closing rapidly. WARBLERS are around longer than FLYCATCHERS, but every species follows its own schedule. Every week has a different mix of birds. By the end of September, the vast majority of FLYCATCHERS and WARBLERS have departed for the season. One exception is that ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS peak in late-September to early October, so this is the best time to be looking for this scarce migrant.

*A House Wren bringing food to its young at
the Reveler Conservation Area, August 3, 2015.*

Photo by Jacques Bouvier.



Some of the THRUSHES are easier to find in September. This is especially so with GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH, but only if you know the nocturnal call. On favourable nights, thousands of SWAINSON'S and dozens of GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSHES fly over the city, and you can hear them just by stepping out of your house.

During September, keep on searching the migrant traps, the Ottawa River, and any suitable SONGBIRD habitat.

One last bit of advice is that late September is the best time to find NELSON'S SPARROW. Starting late September, look for it in the phragmites (tall grass-like vegetation) on the Ottawa River from about Ottawa Beach to Constance Bay. Unfortunately, Nelson's Sparrow seems to prefer this location and is rarely seen elsewhere, including near the river on the Quebec side.

By the end of September, many of the birds on the target list that you have not yet seen are likely gone for the season. Take a look at the 1993 OFNC checklist as the season progresses so as not to waste much time looking for birds that have already left. There are exceptions of course, where very late, out-of-season birds can sometimes be seen, but you obviously cannot count on this.

SOME CLOSING REMARKS.

As we mentioned in the previous two articles, while we have outlined the hot spots and times for these birds, don't neglect inspecting any suitable habitat that is convenient if it is near your home or near where you often go. Rarities and just ordinary good birds are sometimes not at the hotspots.

One final note: Remember that access to Shirley's Bay, a premier spot in the Ottawa area, is vital starting about mid-April, and requires that your OFNC membership be up-to-date and that you had specifically requested that your name be placed on the access list for this area. The updated list was sent out to Shirley's Bay in early April, but there may be another one later. 🐦

The editor wishes to thank Jacques Bouvier, once again, for providing these beautiful bird pictures to complement the article. You can follow Jacques's work (Oiseaux EEO Birds) on: <http://jacques-uiroiseur.smugmug.com/> and <http://jacquesbouvier.blogspot.ca/>.

*Field Sparrow at the
Reveler Conservation Area,
August 3, 2015.
Photo by Jacques Bouvier.*



OFNC Bird Records Sub-committee (BRSC)

Activities 2017

Rémy Poulin

The BRSC is a sub-committee of the OFNC Birds Committee with a mandate to maintain a database documenting significant avian occurrences in the OFNC Study Area and to assure the credibility and integrity of those records. The BRSC actively solicits reports for this purpose and decides which occurrences are sufficiently documented to merit being included in the Ottawa District Bird Checklist. That document was last updated and published in 2015.

The BRSC encourages documentation of any sighting in the OFNC Study Area – defined to be a circle with a radius of 50 kilometers centered on the Peace Tower – of a bird species either identified as “Rare” in the Checklist or not included in that list. The Rare Bird Report form can be completed online at <http://ofnc.ca/programs/birding-in-the-ottawa-area/reporting-a-rare-bird> or a PDF version can be downloaded and mailed. The website also provides information on how to complete a report. While the submission of these formal Rare Bird Reports is preferred as they would typically provide more complete information, the BRSC will consider and vote on sightings that are reasonably documented via other means (typically eBird Checklists), particularly when photographs are available.

The BRSC members at the start of 2017 were:

- Michael Tate - Chair
- Rémy Poulin - Recording Secretary
- Bruce Di Labio
- Rod Dubois
- Marcel Gahbauer
- Mark Gawn
- Jon Ruddy
- Jeff Skevington
- Bernie Ladouceur (Alternate)
- Chris Traynor (Alternate)

Brief Summation of BRSC Activities for 2017

The BRSC met once in 2017, on July 25. At that meeting, two individuals were nominated and approved for membership on the Sub-committee: Michelle Martin and Richard Waters. Welcome aboard! They replace Mark Gawn and Jeff Skevington as Full Members, both of whom have agreed to continue to participate as Alternate Members. Chris Traynor

will now function as an Observer and representative of the Chair of the OFNC Birds Committee. In addition, Michael Tate and Rémy Poulin were elected to continue as Chair and Recording Secretary respectively.

One species was seen in the Study Area for the first time ever in 2017: a Blue Grosbeak. This brings the total number of species on the Ottawa District Bird Checklist to 364. In addition, an Anna's Hummingbird was seen by many observers in Carleton Place in November. That report will be reviewed by the BRSC in 2018 and, once officially accepted, that species will be added to the Checklist.

A list of the Reports reviewed in 2017 follows, arranged by English and scientific names in accordance with the Seventh Edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North and Middle American Birds and its 58th supplement (2017). The BRSC has made every effort to verify documentation prior to acceptance and publication of a record, but the possibilities of errors or omissions remain. The Sub-committee welcomes written communications that would either correct or reinforce any record. These may be forwarded electronically to OFNC.BRSC.Secretary@gmail.com or by mail to:

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club
Box 35069, Westgate P.O.
Ottawa, ON K1Z 1A2
Attention: Bird Records Sub-Committee Recording Secretary

ACCEPTED REPORTS

This list of accepted reports includes new Reports as well as deferred ones where new documentation or evidence is now available. The Report writer's name(s) is underlined and *Finder's Name(s)*, when known, is in italics.

Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*

2017 - June 4, Ontario, Ottawa, Ottawa River above Deschênes Rapids: Nicholas von Maltzahn. Single adult bird seen by many observers on both sides of the river but on that one day only. Photos available. Right: *Western Grebe on the Ottawa River upstream of the Deschênes Rapids on June 4, 2017, by Rod Dubois.*



American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*

2016 - June 6, Ontario, Casselman, Casselman Sewage Lagoons: Gregory Zbitnew (eBird), *Normand Larche*. Single adult bird in breeding plumage seen by a number of observers on that day only. Photos available. The Casselman Sewage Lagoons are somewhat unique in the context of the OFNC Study Area in that the 50-km circle bisects this birding hotspot. Observers confirmed that the bird was seen within the Study Area. Right: *American Avocet at the Casselman Sewage Lagoons on June 6, 2016, by Jacques Bouvier.*



Willet

Tringa semipalmata

2017 - May 27, Ontario, Embrun, Embrun Sewage Lagoons: Gregory Zbitnew. Single bird seen by a number of observers on that day only. Photos available and confirmed that this bird was of the western subspecies *T. s. inornata*. Right: Willet at the Embrun Sewage Lagoons on May 27, 2017, by Mark Gawn.



Laughing Gull

Leucophaeus atricilla

2017 - April 22, Ontario, Ottawa, Twin Elm area: Gregory Zbitnew, Paul Mirsky. Single adult bird in breeding plumage seen on that day only by many observers. Photos available. Right: Laughing Gull in the Twin Elm area, April 22, 2017, by Michelle Martin.



Franklin's Gull

Lencophaeus pipixcan

2015 - May 31, Ontario, St. Albert, St. Albert Sewage Lagoons: David Britton, Colin Gaskell. Single adult bird in breeding plumage. Photos available. This report identified the bird as a Laughing Gull, which generated much discussion and a request for additional information that was subsequently reviewed. Ultimately, the BRSC unanimously agreed that the bird photographed was a Franklin's Gull, and this sighting was accepted as such.

Franklin's Gull

Lencophaeus pipixcan

2017 - June 3, Ontario, Ottawa, Britannia Point: Richard Waters (eBird), Bernie Ladouceur (eBird). Single adult bird in breeding plumage seen by many observers. Photos available. The bird was seen again the following day and there was one additional sighting (most likely the same bird) later that week in Kanata. Right: Franklin's Gull over the Ottawa River in the Britannia area on June 4, 2017, by Adolph Kendall.



American White Pelican

Pelecanus erythrorhynchos

2017 - May 31, Ontario, Ottawa, Britannia Conservation Area: Vincent Agnesi, Manson Fleguel, Kenneth Hooles, Robin Cunningham. Single bird flying from east to west over Mud Lake. Note that as many as two American White Pelicans were seen by many observers in the Lower Rideau Lake area (outside of the Study Area) on numerous occasions in May and June of 2017.

Ibis

Plegadis ?

2016 - September 16, Ontario, Ottawa, Shirley's Bay: Jeff Skevington (eBird), Michael Tate (eBird), Tom Hanrahan, Phil Wright. Single bird seen by many observers over a three-day period. Photos available and confirm *Plegadis* but not to the specific species. It was later reported that a similar bird was seen the previous evening at Andrew Haydon Park by Gary Wong. It was likely the same bird. Right: *Plegadis* Ibis at Andrew Haydon Park on September 15, 2016, by Gary Wong.



Gyr Falcon*Falco rusticolus*

2017 - February 11, Ontario, Appleton, Appleton Side Road: Mark Gawn (eBird), Gerard Phillips (eBird), Jon Ruddy (eBird). Single gray morph bird seen over a period of a number of weeks by many observers. It was also reported closer to Ottawa near Richmond. Photos available. Right: *Gyr Falcon in the Appleton area on February 24, 2017, by Giovanni Pari.*

**LeConte's Sparrow***Ammodramus leconteii*

2016 - October 18, Ontario, Ottawa, Constance Bay: Jeff Skevington (eBird). Single bird observed at the mouth of the creek. Seen by at least two other observers later that same day.

Yellow-headed Blackbird*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*

2016 - August 13, Ontario, Mississippi Mills, Almonte Sewage Lagoons: Mark Gawn (eBird). Single juvenile bird alternately feeding on the exposed mudflats and hiding in the cattails. Seen by many observers that day and the next. Photos available.

Bullock's Oriole*Icterus bullockii*

2015 - November 28, Ontario, Pakenham: Ray Holland, Richard Waters, Mike Tate. Single immature "celebrity" bird seen by many observers over a period of weeks until it was rescued from freezing temperatures on January 5, 2016 and taken to the Wild Bird Care Centre for treatment. It was later flown to British Columbia in August 2017 and released. Photos available. This was a first record of this species in the Study Area. It also generated significant discussion on the role of DNA testing in identification. Right: *Bullock's Oriole in Pakenham on December 5, 2015, by Michael Tate.*

**Connecticut Warbler***Oporornis agilis*

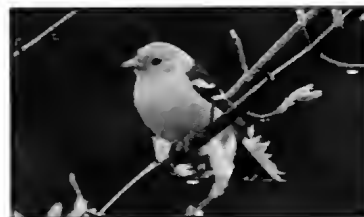
2016 - September 3, Ontario, Ottawa, Britannia Conservation Area: Michelle Martin, Paul Martin, Michael Tate. Single bird.

Summer Tanager*Piranga rubra*

2016 - November 14, Ontario, Ottawa, Bruce Pit: Robin Humphries (eBird). Single bird seen by many observers over a period of six days. Photos available. Right: *Summer Tanager at Bruce Pit on November 19, 2016, by Gillian Mastromatteo.*

**Western Tanager***Piranga ludoviciana*

2017 - May 3, Ontario, Kemptville: Gregory Zbitnew, Ernest Clarke. Single adult male coming to a feeder at a private residence located just within the Study Area. It continued to be seen for about ten days. Photos available. Right: *Western Tanager in Kemptville on May 6, 2017, by Bruce Di Labio.*



Blue Grosbeak

Passerina caerulea

2017 - June 4, Ontario, Ottawa, Kanata area: Gregory Zbitnew, Barry Jenkinson. Single bird seen and photographed on June 4. Sound recordings (and sonograms) were subsequently made of a singing bird in the same general location three days later. Photos available. The report received sufficient votes to be accepted, but it was not unanimous. Those in favour found the photos and sound recordings compelling. Dissenting voters felt the photos did not eliminate the possibility that this was an Indigo Bunting and that the sound recording was insufficient evidence for what would be the first regional record of this species. Right: *Blue Grosbeak in the Kanata area on June 4, 2017*, by *Cathy Maclaren*.



UNACCEPTED REPORTS

The documentation submitted for the following reports, while in some cases detailed, was still found to be insufficient to conclusively rule out any other reasonable possibility. If additional documentation is received, these reports will be revisited.

- 2015 - Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*), July 31, Ontario, Pakenham
- 2016 - Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*), May 20, Ontario, Russell, Russell Sewage lagoons
- Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*), March 13, Ontario, Antrim
- Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*), October 15, Ontario, Embrun, Embrun Sewage Lagoons
- Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*), May 13, Ontario, Ottawa, Britannia Filtration Plant
- 2017 - Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinicus*), May 20, Ontario, Ottawa, Kanata
- Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*), June 26, Ontario, Ottawa, Pine Grove area
- Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*), June 5, Ontario, Ottawa, Mer Bleue
- Yellow-throated Warbler (*Setophaga dominica*), May 22, Ontario, Ottawa, Stony Swamp area

A special thanks to all who took the time to prepare and submit a Rare Bird Report. Your effort is much appreciated by the Bird Records Sub-committee.

Photo: Gyrffalcon in the Appleton area on February 24, 2017, by Giovanni Pari.



Perspective

Linda Jeays

In a perfect world, with endless
blue skies and fine weather,
butterflies would simply fly free
or decorate wildflower blossoms,
and field spiders would weave webs
for art's sake alone, not as sticky traps
to capture sulphur wings, and spread
them to dry in the stinging sun.

Swallowtails would always joyride
the heads of bull thistles, surfing
brisk winds in impossible arcs,
not have their tails sacrificed
to bird beaks and cat paws,
and the fingers of curious children.

In that perfect world, Monarchs
would patrol byways and trails
on their urgent purpose-driven flights,
without the fear of racing wheels
along asphalt highways, or unequal
contests with mad machinery.

Every life has a perilous past,
bearing the invisible consequences
or visible scars, of the roads not taken.
the risks survived, the énigmatic journeys.



Coming Events

PLEASE NOTE:

The OFNC website (ofnc.ca) contains the most up-to-date information on events. Please check it regularly for additions or changes to events. The Club's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/groups/379992938552/) and Twitter account (@OttawaFieldNat) may also be used to announce last-minute changes to events.

Several events require participants to register. Please consult the details in the event description.

We expect to have several more events to offer that could not be finalized prior to the publication deadline for *Trail & Landscape*. These will be announced as soon as possible on the website. Other weather- and year-dependent events can only be announced at the last minute, via the website, Facebook and Twitter.

ALL OUTINGS:

Field trips to natural areas in our region and beyond take place all year round. OFNC events are for members only. Prospective members with interest in attending should contact the trip leader in advance. For some events, participation is limited and members will be given priority. All participants will be asked to sign a waiver. Times given for events are departure times. Please arrive earlier, as leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, please contact the leader.

Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and activity. Please always wear long pants and closed-toe shoes. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by carpool.

MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Our monthly meetings are held in the K.W. Neatby Building, Salon B, at 960 Carling Avenue. There is ample free parking in the lot on the west side of Maple Drive by Carling Ave., immediately to the east of the main entrance to the Neatby Building. Monthly meetings are open to the general public.

EVENTS ORIENTED TO ALL AGES:

Kids are welcome on all of our trips. We highlight some hikes as "oriented to all ages" as these are most likely to be enjoyed by typical children. Depending on your child(ren)'s interests and stamina, please feel free to bring them along on any events. For events tailored to kids, check out the Macoun Field Club (<http://ofnc.ca/programs/macoun-field-club>).

Saturday July 7

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (rain date Sunday July 8)

Especially Kid Friendly

7th ANNUAL OTTAWA AREA BUTTERFLY COUNT

Leaders: Ken Allison and Diane Lepage

Meet: in the carpool parking lot at the intersection of Dwyer Hill Road and March Road (NE of Almonte). Call Ken Friday evening at 613-256-4283 if in doubt about the weather or for specific questions regarding this event.

Description: Similar to Christmas Bird Counts, this event is an all-day survey in a 24-km diameter circle. The count area is centered on Manion Corners (SW of Ottawa) and includes several important butterfly areas such as the Long Swamp and the Burnt Lands alvar. No experience is necessary – we will put teams together on site and match up people so that everyone has a chance to learn from the experts. If you have binoculars and a butterfly net, please bring them along. Butterflies may be captured for identification and release. Rubber boots are recommended, as some of the sites have a lot of poison ivy or can be very wet. It is an all-day event so bring your lunch.

We plan to meet at 5:30 p.m. after the count for a compilation and potluck dinner at the Allisons' home at 561 Wolf Grove Rd., about 2.6 km west of Almonte. Please bring along some food to share plus your own drinks. We hope that everyone can make it to the compilation, as it will be a lot of fun; however, if you can't, we will get your data in the afternoon before you leave. The OFNC has generously offered to pay the count fees for participants to support publication of the data.

Thursday July 12

6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

SOIL MITES AND "SOIL YOUR UNDIES" AT FLETCHER WILDLIFE GARDEN

Leaders: Marla Schwarzfeld and Victoria Nowell, AAFC, Central Experimental Farm

Location: Fletcher Wildlife Garden Resource Centre

Description: Dr. Marla Schwarzfeld and Victoria Nowell are entomologists studying predaceous soil mites and soil biodiversity. They will show us how they extract soil arthropods from soil, introduce us to some of our neighbours – the tiny living critters – as they move around under a microscope, and give an overview of all the major groups of insects and arachnids in the soil at Fletcher Wildlife Garden. We'll also see the results of our Soil Your Undies experiment... a fun way to check how biologically active your soil is. In early May, five FWG volunteers buried pairs of 100% cotton underwear in different spots. They'll dig them up 2 months later, just before the workshop. Let's see what's left! There shouldn't be much cotton left if there is abundant life in the soil. A step-by-step guide on how to properly Soil Your Undies is available at www.soilcc.ca.



*Eastern Tailed Blue
by Colin Freebury.*

Sunday July 15

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

EXPLORE THE LUSK CAVES

Leader: Derek Dunnett

Meet: Parent Beach Parking in the Lac Phillipe sector of Gatineau Park, reachable via Highway 366. Park fees apply.

Description: Serenaded by a series of unseen wrens and buzzy warblers, hike the sometimes muddy trail through a beautiful forest. Travel through the caves in small groups. The thigh-deep water of the first cave will satisfy many hikers' thirst for adventure. The second – optional – cave requires brave spelunkers to immerse themselves in water. For more info on the caves and some maps, see <http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places-to-visit/gatineau-park/lusk-cave>. The hike will run rain or shine, but not in a storm. Bring water, a snack, sunscreen, insect repellent, closed-toe footwear for the cave, and a change of footwear for the trip back. A light, headlamp and towel may contribute to your comfort. The kind of children who enjoy long hikes and who bring their guardians will enjoy the experience.

Sunday July 22

7:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

BIRDING HOG'S BACK PARK AND VINCENT MASSEY PARK

Leader: Richard Knapton

Location: Meet at the north end of the free NCC parking lot off the north side of Hog's Back Rd. between Riverside Drive and Colonel By Drive.

<http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places-to-visit/parks-paths-and-parkways/hogs-back-park>

Description: We will explore these two parks to see what birds are about, and what the habitats look like. There are shrub and wooded areas, open areas, and the Rideau River Shoreline (including the spectacular Hog's Back Falls). Be prepared for walking. Plan for sun, heat and possibly biting insects; bring water and a snack. You may send an email by July 20 to bm.ofnevents@gmail.com if you would like to be notified of cancellation due to weather. If you would like to let us know of any bird news from the area beforehand, you can use the same address.

Sunday July 29

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

INSECT IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

Leader: Fenja Brodo (613-723-2054)

Location: Fletcher Wildlife Garden Resource Centre

Description: This will be an introduction to basic entomology with the focus on distinguishing the main orders of insects (Orthoptera, Ephemeroptera, Diptera, Coleoptera, Lepidoptera, etc.). Microscopes, books, keys and real specimens will help participants see and appreciate the beauty and the intricacy of insect structures that set the different groups apart. We need to limit this workshop to 12 people so please register with Fenja if you plan to attend.

Sunday August 19
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

THE HIDDEN WORLD OF THE GRAY TREEFROG

Leader: Derek Dunnett

Meet: Northeast corner of the Bruce Pit parking lot, off Cedarview Rd.

Description: “What bird makes that sound? I can never see it!” Every hiker in Southeastern Canada has heard the mysterious call of the Gray Treefrog, but most people will never see one. Become someone who has! We will look for tree frogs in a known location, and may look for other frogs or insects as well. These small tree dwellers make wonderful macro subjects. The hike (more of a saunter really) will run in sun or light drizzle, but not in a storm. Bring water, sunscreen, a hand lens if you have one, and perhaps insect repellent. There will be ticks, so dress accordingly. May be cancelled if there are no frogs, so check the OFNC website a week before the hike.



Black Spruce in the Garry Fen.
Photo by Owen Clarkin.

Saturday August 25
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

GARRY FEN TOUR

Leader: Owen Clarkin

Meet: Garry Fen Parking Lot,
Lakeshore Road, near
Alexandria

Description: This late summer hike will showcase the diverse wildlife and habitats present at the Garry Fen Trail, with an emphasis on woody plants. The trail begins on calcareous upland, continues along the fen boardwalk with bog-like flora present, and then winds through various wet and drier habitats on the return. This is one section of the approximately 15-km-long Glengarry Trails system, which are well worth the drive to visit from Ottawa. This is a rain or shine event, so please dress for the weather/conditions.

Website:

<http://www.ontariotrails.on.ca/trails/view/garry-fen-trail>

Sunday August 26 (August 25 in case of bad weather forecast for the 26th)
7:00 p.m. to approximately 10:30 p.m.

SINGING INSECTS AND NIGHT BIRDS

Leader: Bernie Ladouceur

Meet: Lincoln Fields shopping centre parking lot, north side near the Pizza Pizza and Assaly Rd.

Description: Bernie will lead the group to visit spots in the Ottawa area known for their late summer, nighttime chorus. Exact locations will be chosen closer to the date depending on local conditions. Observations will be from the roadside. Be sure to check on weather conditions beforehand to ensure that you are dressed appropriately. Please pre-register by August 23 by email to bm.ofnevents@gmail.com.

Saturday September 1
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**BELL CENTENNIAL
WOODS TOUR**

Leader: Owen Clarkin

Meet: Greenbelt Parking
Lot P13, beside Bell
Centennial Area in
Bells Corners

Description: This woody plant-themed hike will tour the rich and changing biodiversity present in this forest, with native plants predominating near the centre and many non-native species establishing at the periphery. Some of the tallest trees of our region are here: White Pines in the neighbourhood of 120-130' tall. This is a rain or shine event, so please dress for the weather/conditions.

Right: The tall White Pines of the Bell Centennial Woods.

Photo by Owen Clarkin.



Saturday September 8 (rain date September 15)

7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

PETRIE ISLAND BIRDING

Leader: Greg Zbitnew

Meet: Petrie Island causeway. To get there, take the 174 and exit north on Trim road. The causeway is just down the hill from North Service Road.

Description: Petrie Island in early fall has an excellent diversity of birds, with the potential for almost anything: shorebirds if the water levels are right, marsh birds, waterfowl, and songbirds. It can be best described as “Shirley’s Bay light”, but is much more convenient to access and much less visited. Meet on the causeway at 7 a.m. to take advantage of the “dawn chorus” in the marsh. The ending time is 10 a.m. to noon, depending on the results and the enthusiasm level. Although the marsh is easily visible from the road, be prepared to do a lot of walking to access many of the other good areas. There is some chance that participants might need to use the very inexpensive (\$2 for 5 hours) paid parking facilities in later parts of the trip, if the seasonal parking fee is still in place.

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday September 11

7:00 p.m. Social

7:30 p.m. Formal program

Location: Salon B, K.W. Neatby Building, Central Experimental Farm, 960 Carling Avenue

Please check the OFNC website for further details.

Monthly meetings are open to the general public.

Saturday September 22

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

OPEN TRAILS AT MACSKIMMING OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE

Location: Parking available at 3685 Wilhaven Drive and 3640 Hwy #174

Description: Normally, this 425-acre classroom is closed to the public, but it will be open to the public on this date. Come and take a hike, bring your binoculars, camera, magnifying lenses or field guides to explore this unique site, which is part of the Beckett Creek Migratory Bird Sanctuary. No food or drinks are provided for this event, so bring a lunch or picnic. A fire will be set up at the Pioneer Village, if you would like to bring items for a cookout lunch.

Fabulous Fall Fungi

WORKSHOPS 2018

INSTRUCTOR: RICHARD AARON
PRESENTED BY: QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BIOLOGICAL STATION


SESSION 1: **SEPTEMBER 7-10**

NEW SESSION ADDED!

SESSION 2: **SEPTEMBER 24-28**

SESSION 3: **SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 5**

SESSION 4: **OCTOBER 9-12**

- 
- Now in its 9th year – suitable for all levels
 - Small class size – max 12 per session
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Have you been on an interesting field trip or made some unusual observations?
Write up your thoughts and send them to *Trail & Landscape*!

DEADLINE: Material for the October-December issue must be in the editor's hands by August 1, 2018. Send your articles to:

Annie Bélair

annie.TandL@gmail.com

613-832-7802

Vous pouvez m'écrire en français également.

www.ofnc.ca 613-234-6767



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